

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A kit for introducing a surgical implant (1) into a cavity in the body of a patient, the kit comprising:

a surgical implant (1) for implanting in said cavity, said implant (1) being expandable from a configuration for introduction into the cavity to a therapeutic configuration within the cavity; and

a cartridge (2) for packaging said implant (1) in the introduction configuration, said cartridge (2) being provided with an opener member (3) activatable by positive action enabling the cartridge to pass from a closed configuration in which ~~it~~ the cartridge confines the implant (1) in ~~it's~~ the implant's introduction configuration, to an open configuration in which ~~it~~ the cartridge allows said implant (1) to expand;

~~the kit being characterized in that~~ wherein the cartridge (2) includes locking means (4) functionally connected to the opener member (3) and capable on its own, without any external action on said locking means (4) of holding the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-kit according to~~ of claim 1, ~~wherein characterized in that~~ the cartridge further (2) comprises a sleeve (5) provided with at least one side opening (6) formed along its length, said opening (6) being closed by said locking means (4) when said cartridge (2) is in the closed configuration, and said opening (6) being disengaged to allow the implant (1) to expand when said cartridge (2) is in the open configuration.

3. (Currently Amended) The A-kit of ~~according to claim 2,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the sleeve (5) is substantially tubular in shape and is slit along all or part of its length, said slit constituting the side opening (6).

4. (Currently Amended) The A-kit according to claim 2 ~~or claim 3,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the sleeve (5) is made of a material that is flexible, but ~~substantially not~~ substantially elastic.

5. (Currently Amended) The A-kit of ~~according to any one of claim~~ claims 2 to 4, ~~wherein~~ characterized in that the sleeve (5) is made of a fabric having two opposite edges locked together by the locking means (4) so that the fabric takes up a substantially tubular shape.

6. (Currently Amended) The A-kit according to of claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the fabric is made ~~by weaving of~~ woven polyamide threads ~~that are based mainly on polyamide, such as Nylon® thread.~~

7. (Currently Amended) The A-kit according to any one kit of claim ~~claims 2 to 6,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ at least a fraction portion of the structure (5A) of the cartridge (2) is covered in a coating for making the cartridge (2) slide more easily against an external surface.

8. (Currently Amended) The A-kit according to ~~of~~ claim 7, wherein characterized in ~~that the coating includes a material is based on one or more materials taken selected~~ from the following group consisting of:

- a biocompatible elastomer, of the silicone or polyurethane type;
- paraxylilene, ~~of the parylene® type~~;
- polyvinylpyrrolidone (PVP); and
- sodium hyaluronate.

9. (Currently Amended) The A-kit according to ~~any one of claims claim~~ 1 ~~to 8~~, wherein characterized in ~~that~~ the cartridge (2) is provided with a thread (12) having a first portion sewn as a single-thread chain stitch so as to form said locking means (4), and having a second portion (14) that remains free and forms the opener member (3) that can be actuated in traction.

10. (Currently Amended) The A-kit according to ~~of~~ claim 9, wherein ~~and any one of claims 2 to 8, characterized in that~~ the periphery of the side opening (6) is provided with eyelets (13) for being assembled together by single-thread chain-stitch sewing in order to close said opening (6).

11. (Currently Amended) The A-kit of ~~according to~~ claim 10, wherein ~~and any one of claims 5 to 8, characterized in that~~ the eyelets (13) are defined by meshes in the fabric situated close to and along said edges.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A kit for introducing an intragastric implant (1) into a the stomach of a patient to treat obesity, the kit ~~being according to any one of claims 1 to 12 and~~ comprising:

an intragastric implant (1) for implanting in the stomach in order to reduce its volume, said implant (1) being expandable from a configuration for introduction into the stomach to a therapeutic configuration within the stomach; and

a cartridge (2) for packaging said implant (1) in the introduction configuration, said cartridge (2) being provided with an opener member (3) that is activatable by positive action, enabling it the cartridge to pass from a closed configuration in which it the cartridge confines the implant (1) in it's the implant's introduction configuration, to an open configuration in which it the cartridge allows said implant (1) to expand, the cartridge (2) including locking means (4) functionally connected to the opener member (3) and capable on its own, without requiring any external action on said locking means (4), of holding the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration.

14. (Currently Amended) The A-kit of ~~according to~~ claim 13, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the intragastric implant (1) is an intragastric balloon comprising a first flexible bag defining a predetermined inside volume, said first flexible bag being provided with first connection means for receiving a connection member (7) for connection to a first source of a fluid in order to enable said first bag to be expanded in the stomach by being filled with the fluid.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-kit according to of~~ claim 14, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the balloon (1) includes at least one second flexible bag of predetermined volume and provided with second connection means so as to enable it to be connected to a second source of fluid.

16. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-kit according to of~~ claim 15, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one second flexible bag is of smaller volume than the first flexible bag, and is located inside the first flexible bag.

17. (Currently Amended) A cartridge (2) for introducing a surgical implant (1) into a cavity within the body of a patient, said implant (1) being designed to be implanted in said cavity and being expandable from a configuration for introduction into the cavity to a therapeutic configuration within the cavity, said cartridge (2) being designed to package said surgical implant (1) in ~~its~~ the surgical implant's introduction configuration and being provided with an opener member (3) that is activatable by positive action enabling the cartridge to pass from a closed configuration in which the cartridge it confines the surgical implant (1) in ~~its~~ the surgical implant's introduction configuration, to an open configuration in which the cartridge it allows said surgical implant (1) to expand, wherein the cartridge (2) ~~being characterized in that~~ it includes locking means (4) functionally connected to the opener member (3) and serving on its own to hold the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration without any external action on said opener means (3).

18. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-cartridge (2) according to of~~ claim 17, wherein the cartridge further characterized in that it comprises a sleeve (5) provided with at least one side opening (6) formed in its length, said side opening (6) being closed by said locking means (4) when said cartridge (2) is in the closed configuration, and said opening (6) being disengaged to allow the surgical implant (1) to expand when said cartridge (2) is in the open configuration.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-cartridge (2) according to of~~ claim 18, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the sleeve (5) is substantially tubular in shape and is slit along at least a all or part of its length, said slit constituting said side opening (6).

20. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-cartridge (2) according to of~~ claim 18 wherein or claim 19, ~~characterized in that~~ the sleeve (5) is made of a material that is flexible, but substantially not substantially elastic.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-cartridge (2) according to any one of claims claim~~ 18 to 20, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the sleeve (5) is made of a fabric having two opposite edges locked together by the locking means (4) so that the fabric takes up a substantially tubular shape.

22. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-cartridge according to of~~ claim 21, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the fabric is made of woven polyamide ~~by weaving threads that are based mainly on polyamide, such as Nylon® thread.~~

23. (Currently Amended) The A-cartridge according to claim any one of claims 18 to 22, wherein characterized in that at least a portion of its surface (5A) is covered in a coating for making the cartridge (2) slide more easily against an external surface.

24. (Currently Amended) The A-cartridge (2) according to claim 23, characterized in that wherein the coating is ~~based on one or more materials taken~~ includes a material selected from the following group consisting of:

- a biocompatible elastomer, of the silicone or polyurethane type;
- paraxylilene, ~~of the parylene® type~~;
- polyvinylpyrrolidone (PVP); and
- sodium hyaluronate.

25. (Currently Amended) The A-cartridge of claim 17, wherein the cartridge further includes (2) according to any one of claims 17 to 24, characterized in that it is ~~provided with a thread (12) having a first portion sewn with a single-thread chain stitch so as to form the locking means (4), and having a second portion (14) that remains free and forms the opener member (3) that can be actuated in traction.~~

26. (Currently Amended) ~~A-The cartridge of (2) according to claim 25, wherein and any one of claims 18 to 24, characterized in that the periphery of the side opening (6) is provided with eyelets (13) for being assembled by sewing with a single-thread chain stitch in order to close said opening (6).~~

27. (Currently Amended) The A-cartridge (2) according to of claim 26, wherein the sleeve is made of a fabric having two opposite edges locked together by the locking means so that the fabric takes a substantially tubular shape;

wherein ~~when dependent on claim 21, characterized in that~~ the eyelets (13) are formed by meshes in the fabric situated close to and along said edges.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently Amended) A cartridge (2) for introducing an intragastric implant (1) into the stomach of a patient in order to treat obesity, ~~the cartridge being according to any one of claims 17 to 28,~~ said implant (1) being designed to be implanted in the stomach in order to reduce its volume and being expandable from a configuration for introduction into the stomach to a therapeutic configuration within the stomach, said cartridge (2) being designed to package said intragastric implant (1) in the introduction configuration and being provided with an opener member (3) activatable by positive action enabling the cartridge to pass from a closed configuration in which ~~it~~ the cartridge confines the intragastric implant (1) in ~~its~~ the intragastric implant's introduction configuration, to an open configuration in which ~~it~~ the cartridge allows said intragastric implant (1) to expand, said cartridge (2) including locking means (4) functionally connected to the opener member (3) and capable on its own, without any external action on said opener means (3), of holding the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration.

30. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a kit for introducing a surgical implant (1) into a cavity within the body of a patient, the method comprising the steps of:

supplying or making a surgical implant (1) for implanting in said cavity, said implant (1) being expandable from a configuration for introduction into the cavity to a therapeutic configuration within the cavity;

supplying or making a cartridge (2) for packaging said surgical implant (1) in the introduction configuration; and

providing said cartridge (2) with an opener member (3) activatable to enable the cartridge (2) to pass from a closed configuration suitable for confining the surgical implant (1) in its ~~the surgical implant's~~ introduction configuration, to an open configuration suitable for allowing said surgical implant (1) to expand; and

~~the method being characterized in that it further comprises a step of locking~~ the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration, in which the cartridge (2) is provided with locking means (4) capable on its own, without any external action on said opener member (3), of holding the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration, and in which said locking means (4) is functionally connected to the opener member (3).

31. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-method of~~ according to claim 30, characterized in that a cartridge (2) is made which wherein the step of locking the cartridge in the closed configuration further comprises locking the cartridge in, is substantially in the shape of a sleeve, the sleeve including (5) with at least one axial opening (5D, 5E) at one of the ends (5B, 5C) of said sleeve (5).

32. (Currently Amended) ~~The A-method of according to claim 31, further comprising the step of characterized in that it includes a step of inserting the surgical implant (1) in the sleeve (5), in which by:~~

shaping the surgical implant ~~the implant (1) is shaped~~ into its introduction configuration; and

~~then the implant (1) is constrained~~ constraining the surgical implant progressively along its length by means of a jig (23) to reduce the cross-section (S) of said surgical implant (1) while simultaneously covering the surgical implant (1) in the sleeve (5) in the closed configuration.

33. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a kit for introducing an intragastric implant (1) into ~~a~~ the stomach of a patient to treat obesity, the method ~~being in accordance with any one of claims 30 to 32, and~~ including the steps of:

supplying or making an intragastric implant (1) for implanting in the stomach ~~in order to reduce it's~~ the volume of the stomach, said implant (1) being expandable from a configuration for introduction in the stomach to a therapeutic configuration within the stomach;

supplying or making a cartridge (2) for packaging said implant in the introduction configuration; and

providing said cartridge (2) with an opener member (3) activatable by positive action enabling the cartridge to pass from a closed configuration in which the cartridge ~~it~~ is suitable for confining the implant (1) in ~~its~~ the surgical implant's introduction configuration, to an open configuration in which ~~it~~ the cartridge is suitable for allowing said implant (1) to expand; and ~~said method comprising a step of~~ locking the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration in which the cartridge (2) is provided with locking means (4) capable on its own, without requiring any external action on said locking means (4), of holding the cartridge (2) in the closed configuration, and in which said locking means (4) is functionally connected to the opener member (3).

34. (Cancelled)